

Journal of the Royal Society of Arts

NO. 4984

FRIDAY, 17TH AUGUST, 1956

VOL. CIV

CONFERENCE ON TOWN AND COUNTRY AMENITIES

The Council of the Society has decided on the advice of a small Committee which has been set up under the chairmanship of Sir Stephen Tallents, to hold a Conference in the autumn with the object of increasing public concern about the dangers threatening the appearance of the towns and countryside in England and Wales, and of suggesting ways of meeting them. The Conference will be in a sense a sequel to the two lectures on 'Beauty in Danger' given in the last Session. The Minister of Housing and Local Government, who commended the Society's action in arranging those lectures, has agreed to open the Conference which will take place on Wednesday, 31st October, 1956.

Full details of the Conference programme, and of arrangements being made in connection with invitations to it, will be announced later in the *Journal*. It is hoped that as many as possible of the large number of organizations who are concerned with the problems to be discussed will be represented, and a limited number of places will also be reserved for Fellows of the Society. No applications for invitations should be made at this stage.

THE SOCIETY'S CHRISTMAS CARD

This year's Christmas card, the subject of which, as has already been announced, is Benjamin Franklin attending a committee meeting of the Society in 1759, is now in an advanced stage of production, and, it is hoped, should be ready for despatch by the end of September at the latest, thus allowing good time for posting to all parts of the world.

A few specimen cards will be available shortly, and the Secretary will be glad to send one to any Fellow who would like to see it.

An order form for the cards is included at the back of this issue of the *Journal*.

A NEW CONCEPT IN THEATRE DESIGN

A paper by

NORMAN R. BRANSON, A.R.I.B.A.,
*read to the Society on Wednesday, 29th February,
1956, with Sir Kenneth Barnes, lately Principal
of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art,
in the Chair*

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTONE, O.B.E., D.A. (A Member of Council of the Society): This afternoon Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, who was to have taken the chair, is ill with influenza and is therefore unable to be here. Sir Kenneth Barnes has kindly come to deputize for him, and I take this opportunity of thanking Sir Kenneth for stepping into the breach.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry you have not got the excitement of having Mr. Tyrone Guthrie in this chair, because he is always exciting. I am afraid that is a quality that with increasing years has diminished in my personality! However, I am very glad to be here as a figurehead to deputize for him; and I may say that I am extremely interested in the subject. In fact, I was coming to listen to this paper. The Society noted that, and telephoned to me at the last moment to ask if I would take the chair instead of being a member of the audience.

The interest in the substance of the paper is, I feel sure, widely felt by all of those present who have come here to hear Mr. Branson; and I do not wish to take any time now in formally introducing him. His introduction will consist in what he is going to tell us of his present work, which seems to be on the verge of being accomplished. He is working for a very enterprising company run by Mr. Emmet, who is here to-day. I know that we shall all be anxious to find out what the Questors have in mind, which is what Mr. Branson is going to explain in his paper on 'A New Concept in Theatre Design'.

The following paper, which was illustrated with lantern slides, was then read:

THE PAPER

The Questors Theatre Ltd., for whom the designs of the new Playhouse have been prepared, is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee and with a membership of 1,500. It is recognized by the Inland Revenue as an educational charity and is the successor of the unincorporated association known as the Questors which was founded in 1929. Since 1933 the Questors has been operated as a private theatre club and is the owner of the freehold site upon which the new theatre will be built.

The architect's approach to his work must include research into the historical development of his subject. When designing a new theatre building he must be aware of the history of the playhouse and particularly of its more recent history. It is a striking fact that, whereas the whole long history of the playhouse has been one of gradually changing form, this process of change seems to have been arrested some eighty or a hundred years ago, since when there has been virtually

no significant change in its architectural form. This, despite the fact that in all other fields of human activity and thought the period in question has seen the swiftest and most radical changes to have occurred in the whole history of man.

It is no part of my purpose to-day to investigate the reasons for this arrestment of progress—whether and how far it may be due to the restrictions of the theatre licensing regulations, which require the construction of a proscenium wall and the provision of a safety curtain and thus do not allow of any theatrical form other than that of Victorian times when the regulations were brought into being, or whether it is because so few theatre buildings in this country have been associated with a developing artistic policy, or whether the picture frame or peephole theatre, with which we are all familiar, has reached a point beyond which it can develop no further. These matters are for the theatre historian to determine. The awareness of these possibilities may, however, affect the architect's approach to the problem of deciding what form a new theatre should take.

It must be remembered that there has been virtually no new theatre building at all in this country for some 18 or maybe twenty years, so that in any event there has been a clear break in the tradition of theatre planning as long as that of the Commonwealth. These are but some of the historical considerations which seem to support the need for a fresh approach to the question of what a playhouse should be.

Basically, however, the need to find a theatrical form more satisfying than the picture-frame arrangement sprang, as far as the Questors were concerned, from their own practical artistic experience over the past 25 years. Their early productions were upon a somewhat shallow stage behind a conventional proscenium arch. Then a forestage in front of the picture frame began to be added for some classical plays such as those of Shakespeare and Sheridan. Later this was extended to certain modern plays written in a non-naturalistic vein such as Obey's *Noah* and Denis Johnston's *A bride for the Unicorn*. This was done largely for utilitarian reasons to gain more space and to facilitate the flow of the play by giving, in effect, two playing areas—the mainstage and the forestage—between which the action could alternate as desired. It was found in practice that the use of the forestage resulted in a very pleasing and easy relationship between the actor and the audience.

It then came about that the forestage began to be used also for plays written in a purely naturalistic convention, starting with Ibsen's *A doll's house*. That was ten years ago and since then the Questors have experimented with the use of a forestage in many different ways for all types of play, the forestage tending more and more to become not the alternative playing area as at first conceived but rather an extension forward of the main stage area. This unifying of the playing areas has ensured that the action of a play flows naturally and smoothly out towards the audience. New techniques of presentation had to be devised, first to discover and then to utilize the full possibilities of this arrangement. On occasion, and within the limitations of their present building, experiments have also been made with a stage extended further into the auditorium, thus giving an open stage arrangement with the audience on three sides of the actor.

It is perhaps also interesting to mention that as far back as 1935 the Questors carried out a somewhat abortive experiment in 'Arena Theatre' in which the audience entirely surrounded the action. All this experiment was not, of course, in isolation nor was there anything particularly new or unique about it.

The movement away from the picture-frame stage was probably started in this country by Terence Gray's Festival Theatre at Cambridge which opened in 1926. John English's 'Arena Theatre' has since 1948 been touring the country playing on an open stage in a large marquee. The Edinburgh Festival has been notable for its open stage performances in the Assembly Hall since Tyrone Guthrie's first production of *The satire of the three estates* in 1948. Jack Mitchley for some years specialized in true arena productions and both professional and amateur groups have been experimenting with the same style of presentation. The deep forestage of the re-modelled Old Vic Theatre was a less bold step in the same direction, restricted perhaps by the architectural limitations of the old building. The currently popular ice shows use an arrangement of stage and scenery fundamentally the same as that of an open stage. A similar tendency is found in many countries abroad, notably in the United States, where there are a number of well-established theatres 'in the round'. In Paris a professional arena theatre was opened a little over a year ago.

One thing is clear from all this background—that there is a considerable movement in the theatre to break away from the picture-frame stage. The general direction of that movement also seems clear—towards a closer and more intimate relationship between the actor and the audience and towards a theatrical illusion which, with their collaboration, is created in the imagination of the audience. This form of illusion is quite distinct from that created in full naturalistic detail on the stage with a minimum of contributory effort by the observers. To sense that, however, is still a long way from finding the answer to the question 'What kind of playhouse, what shape, what physical arrangement?' The Questors, therefore, set out consciously—even, perhaps, a little self-consciously—to re-study the basic principles which should govern contemporary theatre requirements. In this and in all stages of their thinking and planning they were assisted by a panel of eminent people of the theatre, among whom were Miss Muriel St. Clare Byrne, Mr. John Allen, Mr. Frederick P. Bentham, Mr. E. Martin Browne, Mr. George Devine, Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, Mr. Michael MacOwan, Mr. Norman Marshall, Mr. Bernard Miles, Mr. Osborne Robinson, M. Michel Saint-Denis, Mr. Glen Byam Shaw, Mr. Richard Southern, Mr. Andre Van Gyseghem, and Mr. Michael Warre.

Initially their thought was directed towards the kind of actor-audience relationship which would best aid the imaginative illusion to which I have referred, as distinct from the naturalistic illusion. This led directly away from the picture frame or other arbitrary barrier between the player and the audience. Further, it seems to require conditions which will help a ready sharing of experience between the actor and the audience: indeed, the sharing of experience may be the fundamental principle which makes the theatre work. At this point we become concerned not only with the relationship between actor and individual

member of the audience but also with that between the actor and the body of the audience and between the individuals who make up the audience. That 'intimacy' is not merely the same as 'closeness' can be readily appreciated by considering a performance given to a small audience in a large theatre. Even if the audience be concentrated in the front two or three rows of the stalls, so that the distance between the actor and the furthest member of the audience is only a few feet, there would be little sense of intimacy. This sense depends upon the psychological relationship between the members of the audience and this is governed in part by their physical grouping.

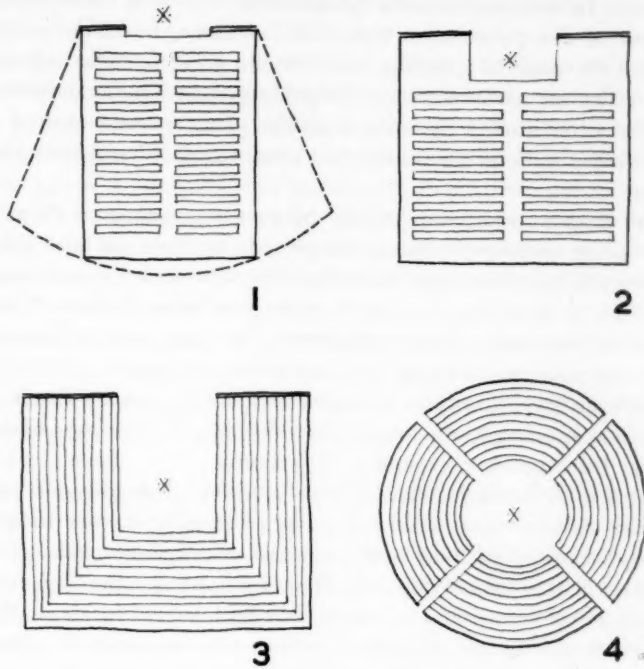


FIGURE 1. *Actor-audience relationship*

Four problems, therefore, present themselves for consideration at the commencement:

- (a) The optimum distance between the actor and the audience.
- (b) The size of the auditorium.
- (c) The grouping of the audience in relation to the actor.
- (d) The grouping of the audience in relation to itself.

Having isolated the problems, the next step is to consider what shape of auditorium and what stage plan would best combine to promote the desired quality.

The first diagram in Figure 1 shows the actor confronting his audience from a stage enclosed by a proscenium wall and the audience in seats parallel with

the stage. This is the conventional village hall plan. If it be extended at the sides, so that a fan shape is formed, this will give a typical cinema plan. If boxes be added together with a circle and gallery we have a simplified version of the conventional proscenium picture-frame theatre. The nearest point which the actor can approach the audience is that established by the proscenium arch and the play must be viewed through the invisible fourth wall. Little or no help is given towards the creation of a sense of intimacy by the audience grouping.

The second diagram indicates an extension of the main stage by the provision of a forestage. In this case the actor can be brought towards the audience beyond the confines of the proscenium wall. The audience, however, is still placed parallel with the stage in grouping which would give but little help in creating a sense of corporate participation in the performance. The Restoration theatres achieved the latter quality by using a similar plan but with shallow balconies around the three walls of the auditorium terminating in boxes on either side of the forestage.

The third diagram shows an entirely different arrangement with provision of an open stage set completely outside the proscenium wall and with the audience seated on three sides of the stage. Here the actor is within the auditorium in the position which he would have occupied in the Elizabethan theatre. The audience would have a keen sense of participation in the play and individuals helped towards a consciousness of being members of an audience.

The fourth diagram illustrates an auditorium wholly surrounding the stage as in a circus or at sporting tournaments. Here the actor is seen from all angles with the audience forming a background to his actions.

If a choice is to be made from among these four arrangements, which is it to be? It has already been concluded, though not without some temptations to the contrary, that the solution is to be found not in some revolutionary form (as, for instance, the last of my four illustrations) but rather by evolution or development from known and accepted theatrical forms. In an analysis of the development of the theatre is found a continuous progression of solutions each governed by the conditions of its time and each with variants to meet such conditions. No lasting movement has sprung from unrelated thought and only transients have been the product of a conscious desire to create a form out of a vacuum.

From what point, however, should one start? The rigid picture frame is still the most commonly accepted theatre form, a fact which cannot be ignored. On the other hand, to make that the starting point would seem retrogressive to the Questors, who had for all practical purposes abandoned the picture frame ten years ago. Each of the arrangements described might have contemporary validity—indeed each is an existing form of theatre.

At this point the case for an adaptable theatre was considered. It should be understood that the purpose of such an adaptable theatre is not for the production of old plays on the kind of stage for which they were written: Shakespeare on an Elizabethan stage; Sheridan with an eighteenth-century apron stage;

Ibsen in a picture frame, and so on. A theatre designed for that purpose would be of academic interest only and would be unlikely to give stimulus to the playwright of to-day. In the theatre the drama must be re-interpreted for each generation in terms of its own time. An older play performed exactly as it was originally produced would fail to have the same effect on an audience of to-day and therefore the new theatre, while providing for the production of such plays, must do so in a contemporary manner and not by imitating the past styles of playhouse form.

The case for an adaptable playhouse is rather that at this moment, when the theatre is in a state of flux, it is not yet possible to determine with certainty what kind of playhouse is wanted. Therefore it is desirable to have two- or three-in-one in order to experiment with them all and thus to discover the line along which to develop. This seemed particularly to apply in the case of the Questors who were quite deliberately offering themselves as a guinea pig. The conclusion was reached that there exists a convincing case for an adaptable theatre and the instructions given to the architect specifically stated that the new playhouse must be flexible in a contemporary way. By that was meant that the theatre must be adaptable to a full range of contemporary methods of staging rather than to the various styles of the past. The degree of flexibility required a stage-auditorium relationship to permit productions on

- (a) a picture frame stage with the acting area confined wholly within the proscenium arch;
- (b) a proscenium stage with a forestage;
- (c) an open stage;
- (d) an arena stage.

Site conditions play an important part in controlling any architectural concept, not only from the planning point of view which, in itself, is complicated by Acts, Regulations and Byelaws, but also from the aesthetic aspect. In the case of the Questors Theatre it was found desirable and possible to plan the Playhouse as an entity separated from all ancillary units. This is particularly satisfying architecturally, because it allows the theatre to express its own essential form and in this country there are but few examples of theatres which have been designed in this way. The majority of theatres can only be viewed as a façade.

The basic shape of the auditorium was first established by resolving such practical problems as the angles of sight lines necessary for uninterrupted vision, the direction of the seating to provide comfortable posture for each stage use, the local authority Byelaws and their concern for widths of gangways, the number of seats in each row and the position of entrances and exits. It was also necessary to evolve a shape capable of giving the actor-audience relationship previously mentioned for each use without destroying the sense of unity of the whole.

The question of compromise was very much in mind at this stage because the result of endeavouring to provide one basic plan for four distinct uses could easily be the failure to give a satisfactory solution for each. The Questors had

decreed that, whereas with the picture frame stage some degree of compromise would be acceptable, no compromise would be allowed with either the proscenium stage with forestage or with the open stage. They were prepared, however, for some improvisation in the formation of the arena. It was found that a semi-ovoid planned around a small pit area would give the basic plan shape and, once this form was established, the stage area was designed as a complementary unit.

To achieve the desired degree of flexibility it was considered that whichever form the proscenium wall took it should be capable of providing any width of opening between the walls of the auditorium. This led to the design of metal screens sliding in tracks hung from above. The screens, which could be either manually or mechanically operated, could be readily moved into stage use or parked in the wings. Further consideration towards this end led to the idea that the small stepped pit area could be filled with moveable platforms, thereby providing a forestage and, if extended over the whole area, an open stage could be formed. When not required for stage purposes, the pit would accommodate seating and the platforms stored beneath the main stage.

At this time the design of the lighting gallery was clarified and it was established within the ceiling over the auditorium and the main stage. The shape of the gallery, following the plan of the auditorium and of the stage, forms two voids in the ceiling separated by a bridge situated over the proscenium line and from which the metal screens could be hung. The lighting from this gallery and the bridge could be directed from any angle towards the stages.

Whilst the various factors were crystallizing into definite plans, it had to be borne in mind that the essential quality of 'theatre atmosphere' must not be surrendered and that the ultimate design must suggest a place of entertainment and not a workshop.

Let us now consider the picture-frame stage, remembering that as each plan form is examined for each different use the Playhouse has been designed as one theatre and that the order of the plans is of no significance.

The development of the picture-frame stage has a very long and interesting history, growing from the proscenium of the Greek and Roman amphitheatres to a recognizable form in the Italian Renaissance Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza. Here the semi-elliptical auditorium faces a stage framed by columns with a permanent proscenium at the rear. This proscenium perforated with five openings was obviously very restrictive and in later theatres the central opening was enlarged and framed with an architrave as in the eighteenth century Scala at Milan.

The plan for the Teatro Alla Scala, Milan, gives better sight lines than the previous example and the sense of audience participation is enhanced by the introduction of the boxes encircling the auditorium up to the proscenium wall. The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English theatres have picture-frame stages, usually with encircling galleries terminating in one or two tiers of boxes adjacent to the proscenium. Thus a degree of intimacy was retained between the actor and the audience. The failure of designers in the years between

the wars to appreciate the necessity for this quality resulted in the elimination of boxes and of theatre plans little or no different from those of the cinema.

The picture-frame stage designed for the Questors consists of six rows of tiered seating with the rear row enclosed to form boxes to assist the creation of theatre atmosphere. Seven rows of tiered seating are placed in the pit parallel with the stage. Three further rows of seats are accommodated in the balcony which encircles the auditorium and terminates on the line of the proscenium.

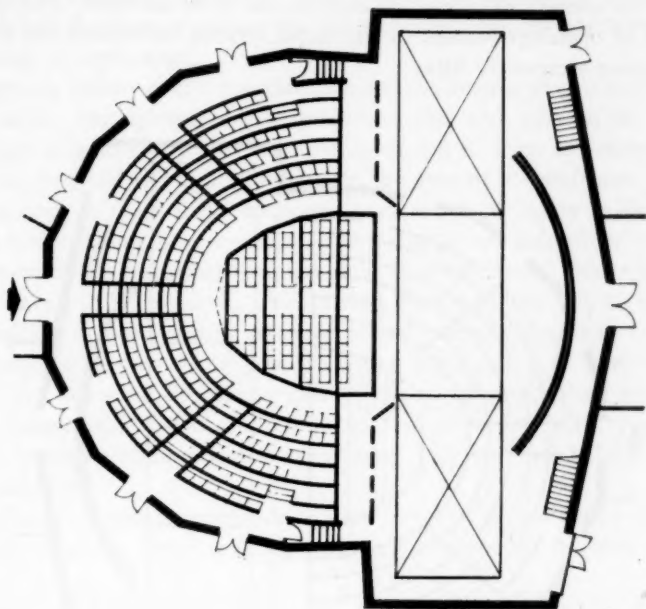


FIGURE 2. *Picture-frame stage*

The picture-frame opening is formed by the metal screens which are slid into position parallel with the front of the stage to give any desired width of opening, although it is anticipated that an opening 24 feet wide by 20 feet high would normally be used. The innermost screens are articulated to form tormentors should they be needed. The acting area can be permanently set or changed by means of the wagons. The stage is fully trapped to give access to the basement below. The rear of the acting area is enclosed by a permanent cyclorama behind which is the access to the dressing rooms, wardrobes and workshops *via* a fire-check lobby. The seating capacity for this use is 337 and of course is determined by the sight lines.

The second use of the theatre, that as a proscenium stage with forestage, is obtained by removing one or more rows of seating from the pit and extending the stage thereover towards the auditorium. The forestage thus formed can be of

any depth but standard sections of platform have been designed in five feet multiples. The access to the forestage is from either side, from the main acting area or *via* stage openings from beneath as the standard platforms coincide with similar sized removable sections in the floor of the pit. It is possible to vary the height or the shape of the forestage by the use of rostra of differing dimensions.

The forestage is not intended to be used only whilst sets are being changed on the main stage but as an extension of the main stage. This being the case it is necessary for scenery to be erected thereon and to be changed. This is possible by reason of openings formed in the metal screens and which are capable of receiving door sections or flats.

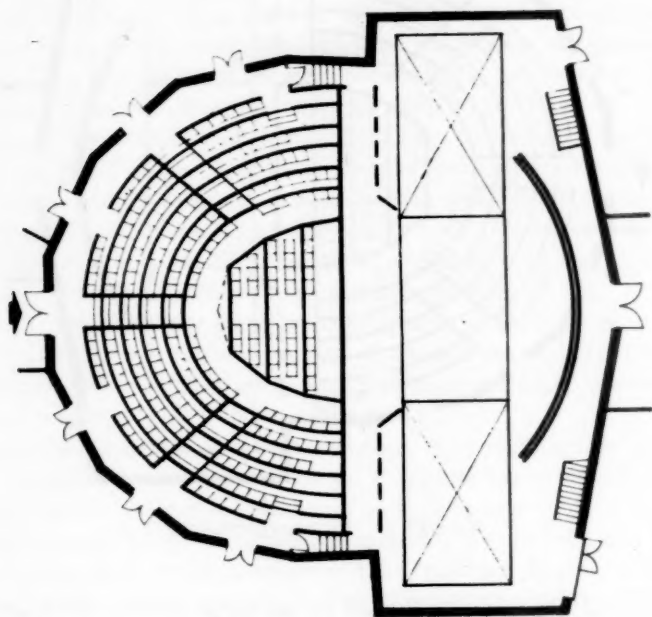


FIGURE 3. *Proscenium stage with forestage*

The seating capacity for this use, with the ten feet wide forestage, is 315, and the arrangement gives the producer an acting area in close contact with the audience for scenes requiring greater intimacy than it is possible to obtain in a picture-frame stage. It is interesting to consider this plan with that prepared by Wren for a Restoration Theatre. The semi-circular auditorium, with boxes around the perimeter, extending to a large forestage with a square main stage at the rear, would have made a most exciting theatre. Before considering the other uses I think it would be advantageous if I were to describe the longitudinal section through the new Playhouse.

The drawing (Figure 4) shows the tiered seating in the main body of the auditorium and in the small pit together with the three rows of seats in the balcony. The latter has been designed to ensure completely uninterrupted vision for all stage uses and encircles the perimeter of the auditorium. The tiers in the balcony have been restricted to three, as a larger number would result in too steep a rake as the sight lines must be described from the front of the open stage. In a larger theatre, with a balcony further from the open stage, the rake would, of course, be modified.

The floor of the pit is removable in sections so that access can be obtained to the area below the stage whenever the pit is covered with the platforms forming the forestage or open stage.

The lighting gallery over the auditorium and the stage is shown with the voids through which the lighting will be projected. For such uses as the open and arena stages it is necessary that the lighting should be from as vertical a source as possible, to avoid the light shining into the eyes of the audience. The main lighting source is from these openings, augmented by lights behind louvred openings in the ceiling. Such openings over the stage area behind the proscenium would be used for suspensions, although it is not intended that a full grid for flying scenery will be required. The lighting control system will be installed in the gallery and remote control extended to any part of the gallery. The bridge formed between the two openings in the ceiling is not only to be used for lighting purposes but supports the sliding gear of the metal proscenium screens. The lighting gallery will also accommodate the air extraction plant and the roof thereover contains sliding panels complying with the regulations governing natural ventilation.

Should an orchestra be required, it could either be placed within the pit area, particularly when an opera is being performed, or it could be stationed in the gallery.

The third use, that of the open stage, is obtained by removing all the seats from the pit and filling the area with the standard platforms previously mentioned.

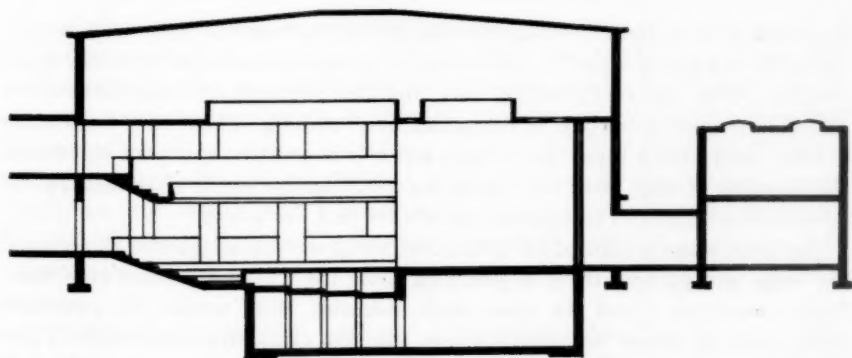


FIGURE 4. *Longitudinal section*

Additional seating is introduced at the sides, which more than compensates for that lost from the pit. The open stage thus formed is at a level one foot six inches above the floor of the surrounding tier. Shallow steps are placed around the perimeter of the stage to facilitate the grouping of the actors. Access to the stage is from any of the gangways, from the main stage, or from beneath.

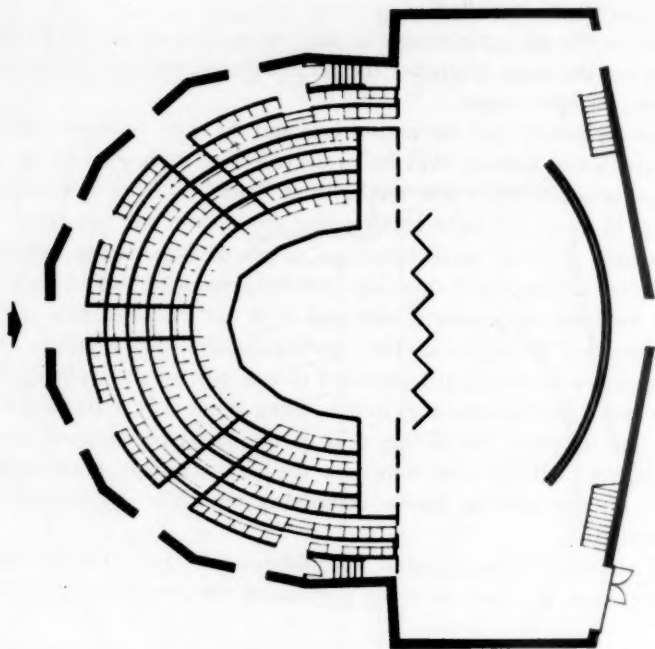


FIGURE 5. *Open stage*

Any section or sections of the platforms used for forming the open stage may be omitted, thus giving access to the basement through coincidental openings in the pit floor. The rear of the acting area could be enclosed by some form of set established slightly upstage of the proscenium opening. There have been many notable productions upon open stages and it is hoped that this plan will enable the capture of that vital actor-audience relationship which characterized the Elizabethan theatre. The seating capacity for this use is 359.

An arena stage is formed by sliding the metal screens away from the front of the stage and parking them in positions along the o.p. and prompt side walls. This completely opens the main stage area and, from within the cyclorama cavity, curved panels are withdrawn to join the main structural walls. These panels, together with the cyclorama, provide a background in front of which three rows of tiered seats are placed to complete the enclosure of the arena stage.

17TH AUGUST 1956

A NEW CONCEPT IN THEATRE DESIGN

Access to the stage is either *via* the openings between the seats or from beneath the stage. This arrangement would ensure a high sense of audience-participation and would be invaluable for certain types of play or spectacle produced wholly in the round. The seating capacity is 461.

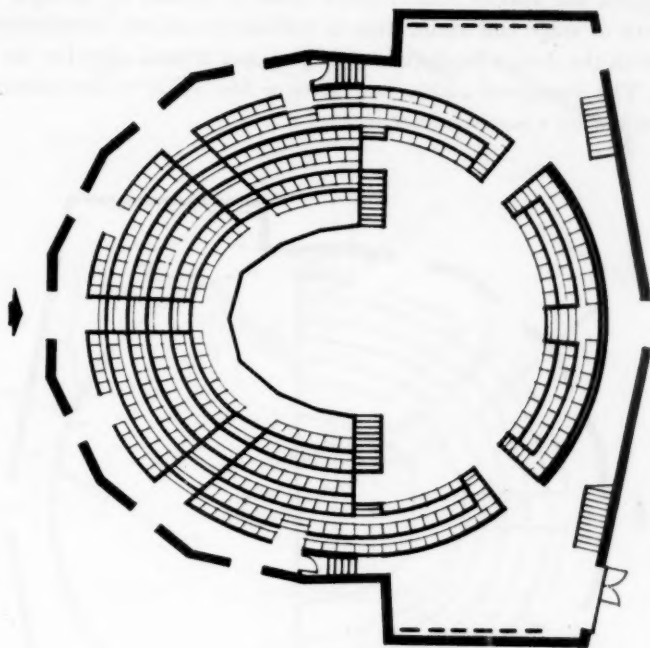


FIGURE 6. *Arena stage*

When the planning of the Playhouse had proceeded thus far it was found that a further distinct use could be obtained from the facilities already created. This is particularly interesting because it suggests that the basic design is capable of greater flexibility than originally envisaged, and in the hands of an imaginative producer still further uses may be evolved. The arrangement has been christened the 'space stage' and is formed by clearing the main stage area and extending the curved panels from the cyclorama to a point five feet from the structural walls, thus providing a semi-circular stage enclosed by an horizon. In the auditorium, the seating may be returned to the pit, giving a capacity of 397. The playing area thus formed enables the producer to create his production with complete freedom of style and to incorporate therein an essential theatrical use of space.

A mediæval mystery play, with the mansions surrounding the semi-circle of the acting area, and in which simultaneous action must take place would be one such use; another would be the use of an extended naturalistic set with both

interiors and exteriors. It is also possible to envisage an entirely abstract setting surrounded by the cyclorama and with the acting area defined only by light. A multiple set could be constructed and a revolving stage introduced. Another possibility to be explored would be the mobile set based upon Gordon Craig's screens and similar to that used in a recent production of *King Lear*, but with greater regard for spacial relationships. Lest it should be thought that this arrangement of stage and auditorium is without precedent, comparison should be made with the design produced by Inigo Jones around 1630 for the Cockpit-in-Court. The octagonal auditorium gives a fine sense of enclosure and the stage is backed by a semi-circular façade.

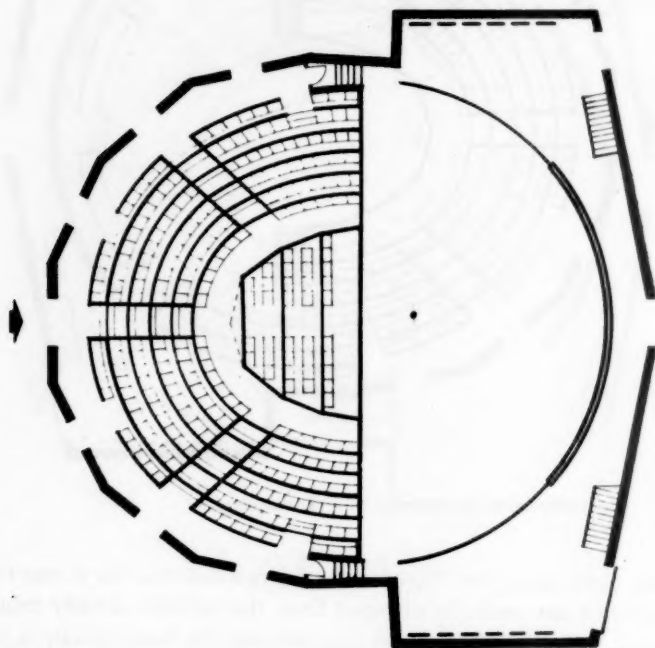


FIGURE 7. *Space stage*

A sketch plan reputed to be by Wren should also be compared because, although it is something of a rogue and bears no relationship to any known theatre, it shows a remarkably clear-sighted solution of the problems of theatre design. The audience are seated in semi-circular tiers and the radius used is continued into the stage area to describe the perimeter of a semi-circle of *periaktoi*.

The general arrangement of the stage area designed for the Questors Playhouse is best illustrated by an isometric drawing. This shows the method of constructing the removable floor of the pit and the platforms forming the forestage,

17TH AUGUST 1956

A NEW CONCEPT IN THEATRE DESIGN

and the open stage. The sliding metal screens providing the picture-frame opening are designed to allow the insertion therein of doors, decorated flats, scenic panels, and so on. The cavity within the cyclorama which contains the curved panels is also shown together with the set wagons. The lighting gallery and the bridge are approached from a stairway at the rear of the main stage.

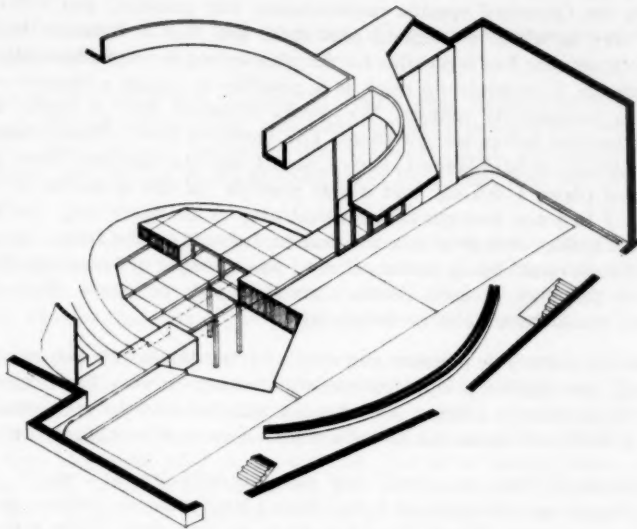


FIGURE 8. *General arrangement of stage area*

In this search for a new concept in theatre design, I have tried to discover what traditions are of significance to us to-day, what contemporary thought is based upon mere rootlessness, what compromises are invalid and what compromises have the power of development within them. The adaptable theatre is not necessarily the final solution—indeed, no solution can be a final one. Playhouse design must change and develop in the future as it has in the past. Our present dilemma arises precisely because of the absence of such development in the past eighty years or so. This concept, therefore, is to be regarded more in the nature of an experimental playhouse where the results may lead to the continuance for a time of the flexible theatre as itself answering contemporary needs, or it may lead to the rejection of certain of its uses and to the development of others. The Questors and I have not attempted to choose for the theatre but we have tried to take an important step towards restoring to the theatre a freedom of choice.

DISCUSSION

MR. EMILE LITTLER: Had the lecturer any thought of the possibility of this scheme's being adapted to the practical needs of a theatre holding, say, 1,600 people? It is not as a rule financially practical to run any theatre which only holds 300.

I would like to know if it is possible to use this scheme for a theatre holding 1,600, and to use it for musical production as well as for straight plays. Does the lecturer think that it is possible to run a musical play with the conductor away in the gallery? Does he think that this method of theatre design will in time be used for national playhouses such as the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon?

THE LECTURER: I think it is possible that the flexible theatre can be designed for the audience capacity which you mention. At the moment we have only given consideration to the Questors' specific requirements. For instance, you will notice the rather free way in which we extend platforms, and that is because the Questors have no labour trouble, but is possible for the platforming to be mechanically operated by simple means. I certainly do think it is possible to design a theatre—a flexible theatre—as a commercial venture. We would certainly have a battle with local licensing authorities before we got there. The Questors have offered themselves as guinea pigs already to Middlesex County Council, and the lists have been joined.

For musical plays, I did say that it was possible for the orchestra to be within the pit area. I had not thought of a musical play or an opera with the conductor way up in the gallery trying to give the beat to a singer on the stage. In suggesting that the orchestra could be up in the gallery I was thinking of occasions when music incidental to the play is used. With a musical play or opera, then of course the orchestra would have to be in the pit area.

MR. EMILE LITTLER: The moment you start to bring the actors out into the stalls, when putting area platforms up, it becomes necessary to move the circles back for sight lines. In putting in a larger audience the galleries or balconies would have to go back. Would this not mean the loss of a certain amount of seating in the house?

THE LECTURER: I think one would find that the difficulty, as I see it, of a large commercial theatre is that one week it may have a large musical company production, and the following week *Private lives*, but there are still those 1,600 seats. I rather think you will find that the audience for certain types of more intimate play would be smaller, therefore an open stage production could easily be used, and the sense of intimacy retained. Where you have the big spectacle, then it is possible that it could be better housed behind the proscenium. That could be done with this theatre because it is possible to change about in that way.

MR. EMILE LITTLER: I cannot agree that the size of the company of any kind bears any relation to the size of the audience. You can have four people on the stage and have a full house, or you could have 400 on the stage and four people in the audience!

MR. BENN W. LEVY, M.B.E.: This theatre that Mr. Branson has devised seems to me such an admirable plan that it would be excellent if it could indeed be adapted to bigger audiences. The difficulty that occurred to me is that he has designed the theatre at present for a proscenium opening of about 24 to 26 feet, which is about the normal size of many West End theatres. Surely, by the nature of his design, it is not impossible to increase the auditorium area without increasing the proscenium opening, or at least having impossible sightlines. Given an audience of 1,000 or 1,200, what size proscenium opening would he find himself involved with?

THE LECTURER: The proscenium opening which I suggested as being 24 feet was just a guess, because it can be adjusted to any width between the structural walls, so it is possible to have it sixty feet wide if needed.

MR. BENN W. LEVY: But how small can it be?

THE LECTURER: There will always be the problems of cut-off from the sides, but

17TH AUGUST 1956

A NEW CONCEPT IN THEATRE DESIGN

at the Questors we lose relatively few seats. Obviously, in a larger theatre the more seats there are around, the greater number you would lose where the normal opening is 26 or 30 feet. That, I am afraid, cannot be avoided.

MR. BENN W. LEVY: Then how far does that rule it out for a theatre of 1,000 or 1,200 people?

THE LECTURER: I do not think it does, because at the present time you have the fan-tailed shape of theatre.

MR. BENN W. LEVY: There is a great deal of space without seats at the sides in this conception though.

THE LECTURER: I think it is possible to design some form of screening for those open spaces. What I was thinking, when Mr. Littler mentioned this, was the screens which have been thought about for the Questors. With the commercial theatre of the present day, which is fan-shaped, there is in fact that cut off area in the auditorium.

MR. EDWIN M. LAWSON: Do the promoters carry with them the powers that be? I cannot quite see how it is going to be possible to extend the stage into the auditorium and at the same time meet the whole requirements of the Licensing, Fire, and City authorities. How is that part of the project going to be overcome?

THE LECTURER: The Questors are offering themselves as guinea pigs in this case, and they are tussling with the local authorities on this very point. There appears to be no objection by the local authorities to our playing outside so long as there is nothing inflammable on the stage area beyond the proscenium. Also, I think, they would be very happy indeed if the proscenium, instead of coming down as the normal fire curtain does, were in fact to be the fire curtain, travelling horizontally. They certainly seem to have no objection to that, so therefore we can meet them in that way. The only difficulty at the moment is that we have yet to persuade them that in a modern theatre the auditorium itself in a far greater fire risk than behind stage.

MR. GEORGE POSFORD: Talking in terms of a larger theatre, particularly of a musical production, can the lecturer tell us if any provision is made for sound amplification electronically, bearing in mind the terrific development in recent years of sound amplification stereophonically?

THE LECTURER: I would have thought that in the theatre, as distinct from the cinema, the last thing one wants is mechanical sound. It ought to be possible in a theatre which is designed acoustically correctly for the actor or singer to make himself heard right at the back of the gallery. I had not thought of it at all I can assure you.

MR. GEORGE POSFORD: In effect, though, most musical productions now have a certain amount of amplification. I am not talking of real singers! I am not talking about opera, that is entirely different. I am referring to the fact that most singers in musical comedy have to have some sort of amplification.

THE LECTURER: Mr. Littler would probably know more about that than I do, but I think that Mr. Christie would agree with me, and that he does not have it at Glyndebourne. I do not think it should be anywhere else.

MR. JOHN CHRISTIE, C.H., M.C.: If there is an arena stage in the middle, the actors will be continually with their back to parts of the audience, and I should have thought that there was a difficulty here. I raise this point because the Old Vic's performance of *Macbeth* in Edinburgh was so bad that I went out after the first act. They were simply shouting at each other. The beauty of the words did not count. How

Shakespeare can be performed without the beauty of the words, I cannot imagine. But if that is the tendency of the present day, it may do.

The arrangement of the seats is again a challenge. The seat-fitting people, who supply the theatres, had never had this experience before, but at Glyndebourne they were faced with it. Sitting in the middle of the audience, one wants to see the chairman in the centre of the stage, and to look between the two people in front of one, otherwise the view is obstructed by the head of the fellow in front and one cannot see anything. I want to have a clear view. Now at the side of the audience, when I am directly behind the person in front, again I look between him and the next person and therefore still see the chairman in the centre of the stage. That problem had never arisen. They did not even know anything about it. If you put your seats on a curve, you cannot deal with the problem. Perhaps it does not matter. It does matter at Glyndebourne. Everything has got to be right!

There was no mention as to where the lighting control was to be. I can only tell you that in the theatre in Edinburgh, where we had to perform, a new system of lighting was put in at great expense. The lights came on and went off for no reason at all. Why should we be distorted like that? It is intolerable. There is no standard and where the lighting control is to go is all important. It must be in front. It cannot be moved about and you cannot have a little consol with tiny handles. How can sensitivity be achieved, moving handles only about two inches long. Our handles are long. Sensitive control cannot be achieved unless they are of some appreciable size.

I noticed that on the drawings the cyclorama was only the same size as the scenery. Supposing we are on the stage holding up scenery, the cyclorama should be at least another 15 feet away from its present position or there will be shadows. That is a mistake that Glyndebourne made which cannot be corrected. I know there is quite a lot of feeling about it. That is a technical point, but you do need the extra space for the cyclorama. It has to be outside everything, it is like the sky. Also, it is used for projection, you can project on to it. I am sorry to take so long in giving these views, but I want to be critical in order to help.

THE LECTURER: May I say that I have spent some very happy hours at Glyndebourne learning from Mr. Christie, and we are not making any of the mistakes which he suggests we are, because we have learned from Glyndebourne! In the first place the seats will be very carefully articulated, so that it is possible to have the Glyndebourne arrangement of perfect seating. The lighting control is within the gallery as I mentioned, and the control will be longer than the two-inch handles that Mr. Christie mentioned. I think that the cyclorama is of adequate dimensions, and of course with the space stage the cyclorama is all round—it could not be bigger.

The production of *Macbeth* which you mentioned was on the open stage at Edinburgh. Frankly I liked it much better than the Old Vic's same production on their fore-stage, as I felt that was very cramped, but I do agree with you they raised their voices; but they also raised their voices intolerably at the Old Vic. I do not think it had anything to do with the stage!

MR. EMILE LITTLER: Mr. Ben Levy's remarks might suggest that I am being critical, but I would like to assure the lecturer that I have come here to learn from him, and that any observations I have made are in a constructive way.

Over twenty years ago I had the honour of battling with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre as manager for three or four years. The seating capacity was under 600 people and a lot less than £100 per performance. We had a very tough battle even in those days with so few seats. I know what trouble Mr. Christie must be having at Glyndebourne with his small capacity.

With regard to the necessity of cyclorama being as far away as possible from the

proscenium, it was during my time at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre that Sir Barry Jackson took the cyclorama out because there it was too close and, as Mr. Christie has said, we could not throw light on it without shadows. We took the cyclorama down and plastered the back wall and sometimes used that instead. Actually we gained another six feet of stage depth, which was a help with all productions. I consider the size of any theatre built to-day is a very important matter in relation to the economics of running it. I have enjoyed the paper, and one day would like to see the same plans worked out for a theatre seating 1,600.

THE LECTURER: I would like to thank Mr. Littler for what he said for I know it was meant entirely in a constructive way. I too would like to see these ideas which have been evolved for this specific theatre carried one stage further, because I am quite convinced that they are capable of extension to a larger theatre, bearing in mind the economics to which you have referred.

MR. PETER GOFFIN: I appreciate very much the fact that the little theatre is an experimental one and therefore ought to be as flexible as possible in order to try out all the possibilities. I feel, however, in its capacity as an ordinary theatre, using the proscenium arrangement, that the plan lacks a flying system of some kind which is useful, and perhaps essential, for certain types of production. If a flexible theatre such as this could be built on a larger scale it should also include the usual facilities so that it could be used for the ordinary type of productions as effectively as for those using any of its other forms. I wonder if the lecturer had thought in these terms on a larger scale, and whether the inclusion of such facilities would in some ways spoil, or lead to a need for modifying, the present scheme.

Concerning lighting, I was not so much concerned with the position of the switch-board, although I do agree entirely with Mr. Christie about the small-size control system. I am concerned more about the actual lamp positions, which at present are mainly in the roof. It will therefore have to be mostly top lighting. It did seem to me, in connection with the space stage, which is perhaps one of the most interesting ideas, that it would be very difficult in some cases to get lanterns housed in strategic position without losing the effect by having the machinery in view.

THE LECTURER: The Questors do not wish to have facilities for flying. They are concerned only with the use of the wagons for changing, but it is possible to extend a grid over the stage, and I do not think that it would unduly affect the arrangements at the back. Lighting does want very careful consideration and we are in fact planning most carefully for it. We have lighting at any point around the perimeter of the stages—that is very important. Lanterns could also be mounted on the front of the balcony. We have not got footlights, but they could be introduced if necessary with a proscenium type of production.

MR. PETER GOFFIN: The difficulty, I feel, is that in the average ordinary proscenium theatre to-day, most of the lighting positions are in fact the least useful places for lights, and one of the real snags in the theatre is to find the best possible places to put lights for different kinds of productions. It is sometimes a great advantage to do away with the front lights, but their positions on the stage itself must be used. It seems to me that the space stage lends itself admirably for experiment with lighting, but unfortunately has not, in a sense, made provision for it.

MR. EVAN DAVIES: In connection with this small theatre, has the lecturer had an opportunity of studying an equally small new theatre: St. Erasmus, in Milan? There the stage is on the floor of the theatre, and the audience is seated on both sides there being no directly front-stage audience.

THE LECTURER: I have seen the plans of that particular theatre.

MR. EVAN DAVIES: This new theatre, experimenting on entirely new lines, provides what we are all trying to achieve, 'an atmosphere of intimacy'.

I do not think that large theatres can provide the same atmosphere as small ones, nor do I think that a small theatre design is suitable in terms of a larger theatre, seating three times the number of people, where distance from actor to audience is greater and mechanical means of amplification have to be used.

This Italian theatre in Milan is a very interesting example in theatre design. I wondered if the lecturer had actually studied such an experimental work.

THE LECTURER: No, I have not seen it, I have just seen some illustrations.

MR. HENRY ADLER: This scheme sounds excellent mathematically and architecturally, but I have seen some of these theatres which are amendable in relationship to actor and auditorium. I feel that there is not the feeling with this theatre. It is all beautifully worked out, yet the relationship or atmosphere is somehow lacking. Has Mr. Branson any plan for the relationship of audience to actor, and arising out of that, the decoration of the theatre, or the feel of the place generally?

THE LECTURER: As I mentioned in my paper, this has to be a place of entertainment, it has to be theatre, and it has to have theatre atmosphere. Nothing is worse, I entirely agree with you, than something rather like a cocktail cabinet which looks like a book-case and then when you open it, it is not a cocktail cabinet but a radiogram. That is why I introduced those little thin columns in front of the boxes. The idea was that by those columns, by closing the rear rows of seats in pew boxes, and with some nice materials of the right colours, theatre atmosphere, which is so essential, would be achieved. No matter what the stage use, that is the important thing. We would try most definitely with decoration—not forgetting red plush and a bit of gilt around the place—to retain that. It is realized that the quality to which you refer is an essential factor of the design.

MR. PATRICK IDE: How does the lecturer mask the top of the cyclorama if he cannot have a border? I could not see from the drawings how it was done.

THE LECTURER: The cyclorama goes straight up to the ceiling and stops there. The ceiling is painted quite dark, preferably black.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to propose a vote of thanks to the lecturer, because I feel that the way he is going into this matter is thorough. That is a very valuable asset in anything that is going to take a practical shape. I hope earnestly that it will take a practical shape. He has given us a clear idea of what he, Mr. Emmet, and the Questors are aiming at, and all I can hope is that they will not find as much difficulty in getting the finance to complete the scheme as I had with the Vanburgh Theatre at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

The vote of thanks to the Lecturer was carried with acclamation; and, another having been accorded to the Chairman, the meeting then ended.

THE WORK OF THE COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Thomas Holland Memorial Lecture by

H. NUTCOMBE HUME, C.B.E., M.C.,*

Deputy Chairman of the Colonial Development Corporation, read to the Commonwealth Section of the Society on Thursday, 12th April, 1956, with the Right Honble. Lord Milverton, G.C.M.G., in the Chair

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Nutcombe Hume is eminently the person to give us a talk on this subject. He has been on the Board of the Colonial Development Corporation since its initiation and he can tell you about it, and answer any questions which you may care to ask him. I am sure that he will give a very satisfactory account of the way in which the Corporation has now been steered into calmer waters. I have no intention of encroaching on his preserves and I am not going to say anything at all myself about the Corporation, but I have been asked to say a word about the Thomas Holland Memorial Lecture.

The lecture was founded in 1951 by Sir Thomas Holland's widow to commemorate her husband's long association with this Society, of whose Council he was a member for very many years. He was head of the Geological Survey of India and a member of the Viceroy's Council for Industries and Munitions. The lecture is normally concerned with some subject relating to the industrial or educational development of the Commonwealth, and the subject this afternoon is one which still maintains an intense interest. We know Mr. Hume as a very eminent chairman of various businesses in the City of London, but this is one of his other manifestations. May I hasten to say that I do not mean to imply that the Colonial Development Corporation is not run on business lines?

The following lecture was then delivered:

THE LECTURE

In May of last year, Sir Hilton Poynton gave an interesting and comprehensive survey of the whole field of colonial economic development (*Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol. CIII, p. 905). He made only a passing reference to the Colonial Development Corporation because he was describing many factors outside the Corporation's sphere.

The purpose of this lecture is to describe how C.D.C. fits into the general picture of colonial development; what is its particular task; how it is tackling it; the progress it is making and something of the experience it is gaining and the lessons it is learning.

THE COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S TASK

First of all let us be clear about the Corporation's *raison d'être*. Let me quote

* Now Sir Nutcombe Hume, K.B.E.

the actual words of the Overseas Resources Development Act, 1948. In Section I, the Corporation is

charged with the duty of securing the investigation, formulation and carrying out of projects for developing resources of colonial territories with a view to the expansion of production therein of foodstuffs and raw materials, or for other agricultural, industrial or trade development therein.

In the discharge of this duty the Corporation is expressly empowered to carry on, or to promote the carrying on of all activities which appear to be 'advantageous or convenient for or in connection with' it. If this piece of Parliamentary drafting is analyzed, it will be seen at once how wide is the range of the Corporation's opportunities and responsibilities, especially bearing in mind the geographical spread and diverse character of the British colonial territories.

First—'investigation' (I will have more to say on this later); then 'formulation'; then 'carrying out'; 'expansion of production of food and raw materials'; 'other agricultural, industrial and trade development'. This is indeed a comprehensive mandate!

THE METHOD

The powers given to the Corporation in Section I of the Act left a sensibly wide discretion as to the methods by which its manifold tasks could be tackled. The Corporation can carry out development, including the processing and marketing of products, itself under its own direct management; it can establish or expand other bodies to do the work; or it can work in partnership with, and delegate management to, other bodies whether private enterprise or government authorities. I shall give examples of some of these alternative methods when I come to describe the Corporation's activities.

THE MEANS

The Secretary of State for the Colonies is authorized to advance to the Corporation sums the total of which outstanding at any one time does not exceed £100 million, and the Corporation is also empowered to borrow up to £10 million on short term. These loans form the capital of the Corporation, and interest on them is payable in accordance with rates prevailing at the date of each advance. The Corporation is by the Act required to ensure that its revenues are sufficient to meet its outgoings taking one year with another. It must pay its way like any other commercial concern and in addition it must pay interest on its capital and must repay the capital.

On long-term loans interest payments and capital repayments are made by 33 annuities beginning in the eighth year from the loan; on medium- or short-term loans, interest is paid as it is due and capital is repayable at the end of the loan period.

COMMERCIAL BASIS

I would like to emphasize this commercial discipline under which the Corporation has to work and to ask you to bear it in mind in connection with what I shall say later about the Corporation's activities and the lessons we have

learned. It marks the fundamental difference between the C.D.C. and the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. There has, I think, been a little confusion in the minds of some people, both overseas and at home, as to the respective functions of these two instruments.

Money provided by Parliament under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts (C.D. & W.) is used primarily to further colonial development of a non-commercial character. Projects financed by this means are those which, in the main, are not expected to show a financial return; their aim is rather to lay the essential foundations for wealth creation—communications, scientific research, public utilities, education, health services, and so on.

C.D.C. is an entirely separate organization; none of its funds come by way of grant monies and its projects must be such as will ultimately earn revenue to cover the payment of interest and repayment of capital on the terms I have just mentioned. It will be seen therefore that in selecting projects and in operating them C.D.C. must follow normal commercial principles and practice. Within, and inseparable from, the overall task of helping each territory to develop its economy, profit must be an essential criterion.

That is not to say that it is always easy to draw a sharp dividing line between what is commercial and what is not. In undeveloped areas projects have to bear heavy expenditure on public utility work on such necessary things as roads, housing and health services and this can lead to over-capitalization and can tip the scale against the marginal risks in which the Corporation deals. Furthermore, the application of commercial standards means that some types of development otherwise deemed desirable are ruled out of the Corporation field. The Corporation has, more than once, drawn attention to this and has suggested that some means be found, possibly by closer co-ordination with C.D. & W., to enable it to undertake work which, though unlikely to be financially profitable, is agreed to be a worthwhile contribution to a territory's economic development.

Having described the Corporation's task and the essential conditions under which it is being tackled I must go on to say something of the achievements and failures so far; also something of the lessons that have been learned. I think it will help to understand the picture more clearly if I first say a brief word about the Corporation's administration and about its relations with local colonial governments and people.

ORGANIZATION

The Board of the Corporation consists of a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and not less than four or more than ten other members, appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies 'from amongst persons having had experience of and shown capacity in matters relating to primary production, industry or trade, finance, science, administration, organization of workers or welfare'. The Secretary of State also appoints the Corporation's auditors and receives from the Board an annual report with a full statement of accounts which are presented to Parliament and then printed and published by H.M. Stationery Office.

Board members, including the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, serve on a part-time basis. The chief full-time executive officer, appointed by and responsible to the Board, is the General Manager. Under him at Head Office there are controllers with functional responsibilities for investigation, finance, and operations, each with a staff of experienced assistants. Overseas six senior executives are controllers of regions and are responsible for all Corporation activities within their respective areas.

In the early days of the Corporation a system of functional divisions was built up at Head Office, each with a qualified technical manager and staff. There were agriculture, forestry, mineral, and several other such divisions each controlling their particular projects from London. This was not found to be an efficient or economical method of control, and in 1951 there was a reorganization which resulted in the appointment of the regional controllers I have mentioned and in the disbanding of the Head Office technical divisions. Greater use is now made of outside technical and scientific experts, who are consulted as need arises, and the Corporation has also appointed an advisory panel of eminent agricultural scientists to whom problems of tropical agriculture are frequently referred. This reorganization, besides giving greater efficiency and better local relations, has resulted in considerable reduction of administrative costs.

The regions into which the Corporation's projects are grouped follow naturally from the geographical disposition of the colonies themselves. There is first the Caribbean Region, which of course includes all the British West Indies islands, the two mainland territories of British Guiana and British Honduras, and also the Bahamas. The headquarters of this region are in Barbados which is a convenient centre from which the Regional Controller can maintain contact with the various colonial governments, with the projects in the region and with the office of the Comptroller for Development and Welfare which is also in Barbados.

There is the Far East Region which at present has projects in North Borneo, the Federation of Malaya and in Singapore but which would also include Brunei, Sarawak, Hong Kong, Fiji and the Western Pacific Islands should projects be launched in any of those territories.

Then there are four regions in Africa. The East Africa Region, with headquarters in Nairobi, has projects in Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, and would also include Mauritius, Seychelles and Zanzibar. The West Africa Region covers the four British West African territories of The Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone; its office is in Lagos. There is a separate Central Africa Region for the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and finally a region, based for convenience in Johannesburg, for the High Commission Territories, Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland. One project outside any region is the Tristan da Cunha Development Co., Ltd., which is dealt with from London through the office of the company in Cape Town, but which in our reports is grouped with the High Commission Territories Region.

LOCAL ASSOCIATION

I will now say a word about the Corporation's local relationships which we

17TH AUGUST 1956

WORK OF COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

regard as most important. There is a negative provision in the Act which says that no project shall be encouraged in any territory until there has been adequate consultation with the local government concerned. This, of course, is only commonsense and in fact, quite apart from any statutory obligation, the Corporation has always maintained the closest possible liaison and consultation with colonial governments.

It is also the responsibility of Regional Controllers to see that good relations are maintained with local people and local interests. The Corporation is a business organization and its business relations must follow normal commercial principles and practice, but it has always in mind that it is an instrument of Her Majesty's Government for helping to advance the prosperity and well-being of the colonial peoples. By colonial peoples I mean all those who have their permanent homes in a territory irrespective of race or colour. Naturally the Corporation must keep clear of involvement in local political conflicts, particularly those arising from racial divisions and, in its own activities, it practises no racial discrimination.

It is deliberate policy of the Corporation wherever possible to enlist in its projects the active participation, both financially and in management, of local interests, whether governmental or private enterprise or both.

I want to say a special word about management later, but let me say here that wherever there are reliable commercial firms who have long experience, and an established organization for dealing with any particular line of development, we try to bring them in. There is sometimes a fear on the part of private enterprise that partnership with governments would lead to too much control and restriction, while on the governmental side there may be a feeling that commercial firms are only concerned with their own interests and that their activities must be carefully watched and checked in the wider interest of the community. C.D.C. is neither private enterprise nor government department; it can render useful service as intermediary, stimulating private enterprise and experience, and linking them with public resources and endeavour.

LABOUR RELATIONS

While speaking of local relationships it is perhaps appropriate to say a word on labour relations and employment policy. In the case of those projects which are directly managed by the Corporation it has always been the practice to co-operate fully with local government Labour Departments and to fix wages and working conditions in keeping with prevailing standards. On some projects much attention has been paid to the provision of welfare services like clubs, sports fields and cinema shows; where necessary medical services and housing have been provided, often in co-operation with the local authorities.

Trade unions are acknowledged wherever they have been registered and recognized under local laws. Where technical and supervisory skills have not been locally available attempts have been made to train local people, and although the possibilities of regularized training by means of schools and proper apprenticeship schemes are limited, several projects have been successful in 'training on the job'.

PHYSICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Now I must say something of the Corporation's operations in the field of colonial development. There are at present 63 projects in hand for which a total of nearly £55 million has been sanctioned. Of this sum over £37 million has already been advanced and used.

It is not possible to go through every one of the 63 projects and describe them all in detail. They are all described and reported upon in the Corporation's Annual Report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies which is available from H.M. Stationery Office. I would like, however, to take one or two representative projects from each of the six regions and to describe what we are trying to do there and how we are getting on. Before turning to the regions there are two general features about all the projects that are worth noting—first, their functional diversity and secondly, their stages of development.

FUNCTIONAL GROUPING

The functional diversity of projects is shown each year in the Annual Report by a table giving the proportions of capital approved and capital employed under various heads. The functional grouping and proportions are approximately as follows:

	<i>Number of projects</i>	<i>Percentage of capital deployed</i>
Agriculture	12	20·0
Animal products	6	5·4
Factories	6	6·9
Fisheries	1	0·3
Forestry	5	12·0
Hotels	1	0·7
Minerals	10	13·0
Property and housing	7	10·9
Power	7	26·3
Transport and communications ...	8	4·5

As the economy of practically every colony is based on primary production it is not unnatural that agriculture, animal products, forestry, and minerals account for more than half the projects. But it will be seen that there is a fair balance of investment in those projects which will stimulate further development such as those for power, transport and communications.

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Broadly speaking the phases through which development projects have to pass are:

- (a) research and/or exploration;
- (b) investigation and/or prospecting;
- (c) test by pilot scheme;
- (d) development from pilot scheme to full-scale operation;
- (e) commercial operation.

The Corporation cannot normally provide finance for general research and exploration, but at whatever stage a proposal is brought to the Corporation it is essential, before any major financial commitment is made, to know that the initial stage of investigation has been adequately done and that there is definite prospect that the project is likely to become commercially viable. Sometimes we have to start right at the beginning and on other occasions a certain amount of preliminary work has been done; but there are no occasions on which it can be dispensed with.

Full-scale production may not be reached until the project has been in production for some years. The period of initial trading, which itself may follow a long period of investigation and development, is a testing time for most new projects; losses at this time may quite reasonably be expected on a project that will ultimately be successful, and such losses can properly be regarded as part of the capital cost.

Let us now look at the regions and one or two of their projects to see how they are contributing to development. I will start with the Caribbean Region.

CARIBBEAN REGION

There are 18 projects in the British West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras. The total capital employed in projects in this region is £6.5 million and a further £1 million has been sanctioned. Electricity projects in Barbados, British Guiana, Dominica, St. Vincent and Jamaica will undoubtedly serve to stimulate further development.

In the widely separated British territories of the region communications are an important factor not only in furthering greater economic progress but also in helping closer political cohesion. Contributions by the Corporation in this field are its participation with an experienced shipping firm in the new inter-island shipping service and the loan of £55,500 to help finance the construction of the new airfield on Grand Cayman. The inter-island shipping service started early in 1955 and is already meeting a long-felt need.

Primary production is being developed by gold, timber and rice projects in British Guiana, by the small but successful banana and copra estate in Dominica, and by a loan to the Citrus Growers Company in Jamaica to finance an extension of its fruit processing factory. A cooling store built and operated by the Corporation in Kingston is also proving of considerable benefit to Jamaican producers.

A problem that has proved extremely difficult and has given the Corporation great anxiety is the search for commercially viable means of helping the economy of British Honduras. A stock farm and a banana plantation were both, for varying reasons, unsuccessful and had to be discontinued. Similarly long and exhaustive, as well as expensive, trials have been made into the commercial production of ramie fibre; this also has been discontinued largely owing to the failure of the world market for ramie. Trials are, however, continuing in British Honduras with citrus and, on a small scale, with cocoa. Whether these can be developed beyond the pilot scheme stage will depend on the experience to be gained over the next few years and on the availability of labour. A successful venture in British Honduras has undoubtedly been the Fort George Hotel. Built and equipped on modern lines and maintaining a good standard of service, this hotel is proving a great asset to the colony in providing for tourist and business visitors.

FAR EAST REGION

The Corporation's projects in the Far East are in the Federation of Malaya, Singapore and in North Borneo. Proposals for projects in other British Far East territories have been examined from time to time but none have yet been found that were commercially practicable. There was for instance a very thorough and costly investigation into a hydro-electric scheme in Fiji.

The amount of capital at present sanctioned in the Far East Region is £15.4 million of which £13 million is employed. The largest single investment, over £7 million, is in the Central Electricity Board, Malaya, where the money advanced by the Corporation has been used for building the new Connaught Bridge Power station in Selangor. The Federation faced a grave shortage of electric power after the war and this use of Corporation funds helps to make possible much further general development and is an indirect investment in mining and other productive industry.

A highly successful project which operates in both Malaya and Singapore is the Malaya Borneo Building Society. It was formed in 1950 to help alleviate the acute housing shortage. Over £6 million has been advanced to nearly 5,000 individual owner-occupiers of new houses but apart from this the operations of the Society have shown a way of investing savings in better living without recourse to state control or subsidy, and have stimulated the building trade and its allied industries. Incidentally, the success of this project is having an influence beyond Malaya; the Society's advice on possible building society schemes has been sought from places as far apart as West Africa and Hong Kong.

Other projects helping to relieve Malaya's undue dependence on rubber and tin are an oil-palm estate where, unfortunately, progress has been hindered by the activities of bandits, and a pilot scheme for cocoa in partnership with a well-known planting firm and one of our leading cocoa firms. The cocoa pilot scheme has made good progress and is now on the threshold of considerable expansion to the commercial production stage.

The introduction of secondary industries in Singapore is being encouraged

17TH AUGUST 1956

WORK OF COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

by the development of an industrial estate on which four new factories are now in production.

In North Borneo the Corporation is developing former Japanese-owned rubber and hemp estates. There is a shortage of labour and this, together with a very worrying plant disease in the hemp, has made progress difficult but the rehabilitation and modernization of the estates are being pressed forward and new crops are being tried.

EAST AFRICA REGION

Capital sanctioned for projects in East Africa amounts to £13·3 million; the amount employed at the end of 1955 was £7·9 million. Of 13 projects in the region, eight are for investigating and developing mineral resources, mainly copper in Uganda, coal in Tanganyika, and copper, gold, silver and zinc in Kenya. The Kilembe copper mine in the Ruwenzori Mountains, in the development of which the Corporation is in partnership with the Uganda Development Corporation and an experienced Canadian mining firm will, with the consequent railway extension, materially assist the development of the Western Province of Uganda.

In the Southern Province of Tanganyika the Corporation has spent over £400,000 in proving the existence of exploitable quantities of good coal but its development awaits the provision of a railway link. With this, considerable development could follow in that area.

Another valuable contribution to Tanganyika's development is the wattle growing scheme at Njombe. Here some 30,000 acres are being planted with black wattle the bark of which is used for the production of tanning extract. Alongside the Corporation's own estate the local Africans are being encouraged and helped to grow 20,000 acres of their own wattle. A processing factory is now being built and the project will result in the introduction of a new crop and a new industry to an area where Africans previously were barely able to sustain themselves on soil which, though good for wattle is very poor for food crops.

As in most under-developed areas, the provision of electric power is a vital element of development in East Africa. The construction of the Owen Falls Hydro-electric Station has opened up great possibilities in this direction and to assist Kenya to take advantage of this source of power the Corporation has taken up £3½ million of the £7½ million debenture issued by Kenya Power Co., Ltd. This is in keeping with one of the main functions of the Corporation—to prime the pump of private investment.

Another interesting development in Kenya is East Africa Industries Ltd. in Nairobi. This was a small industrial plant started by the Government during the war. The Corporation took it over and subsequently enlisted the participation of Unilever Ltd., who now manage it. A margarine factory has been constructed and the possibilities of extension to soap and glycerine manufacture are in prospect.

CENTRAL AFRICA FEDERATION

At the time the Federation was established the Corporation was growing

tung and tobacco in Nyasaland and had, in partnership with the Northern Rhodesian Government, established a cement factory in Northern Rhodesia. It had made a loan to Central African Airways to finance the purchase of new modern aircraft, and a very thorough two years investigation had been made into the possibilities of commercial afforestation on the Nyika Plateau in Northern Nyasaland. Since Federation, loans have been negotiated for all three territorial Governments to help in their schemes for the better housing of Africans, a very necessary factor in economic as well as social development. Commercial associates have been brought in to Chilanga Cement Ltd. and the plant has been expanded to treble its original capacity. Development of the plantation projects in Nyasaland has gone forward but their ultimate success will depend very largely on the provision of communications and the securing of markets.

The total of Corporation capital now sanctioned for development in the Federation is £6 million of which £2.3 million has already been employed.

HIGH COMMISSION TERRITORIES

As yet the Corporation has no project in Basutoland. This is not because this Protectorate has been neglected; one or two proposals have been suggested but there have been none so far that have been found suitable for the Corporation's participation. In the other two territories, however, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, the Corporation has a total of £9.7 million sanctioned of which £5.4 million has been employed.

The major economic activity in Bechuanaland is, of course, the cattle trade and the Corporation is stimulating this by the development of ranching and by the *abattoir* at Lobatsi, which has introduced a useful and profitable industry to the Protectorate and enabled it to retain the proceeds from processing and by-products which formerly went to neighbouring territories.

By its large irrigation and afforestation projects in Swaziland the Corporation is helping that little country to make more fruitful use of its plentiful rivers and fertile land. Large areas of bush have been cleared, new crops are being introduced and the hills are becoming covered with pine trees which open up the possibilities of eventual pulp and lumber industries. All this means that the problem of a railway and better road communications for Swaziland is becoming increasingly urgent.

WEST AFRICA REGION

The Corporation's activities in West Africa are at present confined to the Gold Coast and Nigeria. There was, of course, the much publicized Gambia Poultry Farm but I am going to say a word about our failures in a moment, when I come to speak of some of the lessons we have learned.

Present operations in West Africa are mainly in the field of basic services. Roads and other civil engineering contracts are being carried out by experienced associated companies; there is also a loan to the Lagos Executive Development Board for land reclamation and development. The Corporation is helping in the utilization of Nigeria's timber resources by its participation in Ome Sawmills of Nigeria Ltd., which operates a new modern sawmill in the Western Region.

17TH AUGUST 1956

WORK OF COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Capital sanctioned for these projects to date is nearly £3 million, of which £2.5 million is employed. The Corporation would welcome further opportunities of working in West Africa in association with commercial and local interests, and in fact a number of interesting possibilities are being examined.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

I am not, here, going to try to give you a detailed financial account with a lot of figures. For those who are sufficiently interested the accounts are published every year in the Annual Report. We in the Corporation are very conscious that we are using public money and that through Parliament we have a responsibility to the British taxpayer.

The Corporation was never expected, and never intended to be, an organization for making large profits. Nevertheless, it is expected in due time to pay its way. The requirement in the Overseas Resources Development Act is that the Corporation must manage its affairs so as to secure that its revenues are sufficient to meet all charges to its revenue account, 'taking one year with another'. This means that over a reasonable period the Corporation must earn sufficient to meet all its charges including repayment of capital and payment of interest. Moreover, it is inseparable from good management practice that reserves are accumulated.

Now let us see what has happened so far. In the early years of the Corporation, when it was under a strong popular urge to show vigorous and even spectacular activity in colonial development, some large-scale schemes were started which failed to stand the test of economic and commercial soundness. Consequently, the money expended on them was lost and as the repayment of this money, as well as interest on it, would eventually become due a heavy financial burden was created. The Government recognized the Corporation's difficulty and tried to meet it. They agreed to waive the interest due on abandoned projects which had been started before 1951. They also offered to write off the dead capital on some of these early failures, but when this offer came to be discussed in detail it emerged that the amount to be written off was only about half that which the Corporation considered should come within the offer. We feared that public and Parliamentary opinion would gain the impression that there had been a wiping clean of the slate, whereas a heavy burden of several million of dead capital would have still remained. The Corporation therefore declined the offer and instead transferred the amount to a special losses account. You will find it shown as a separate item in our balance sheet for 1954 where it is shown provisionally as something over £6½ million; the balance sheet for 1955 has not yet been published.

From the Corporation's start in 1948 until 1955 there has in fact been a deficit every year, but as a result of ruthless pruning of hopeless projects and by careful retrenchment and reorganization of some others the annual deficit has been greatly reduced in recent years until, in 1955, the Corporation is able for the first time to show a surplus on the year's operations. Financially, the Corporation has now turned the corner and, with careful and realistic management, its

financial position should show an increasing improvement in the years ahead. This must also be remembered: the Corporation has been acquiring and developing some useful assets which will in time show a favourable return in the profit and loss account as well as contributing to the economies of the colonies in which they have been established.

I am convinced that any Corporation engaged in colonial development, or any other form of enterprise, is a much more useful instrument if it makes profits than is one which fails to maintain its capital intact and to serve that capital with interest or dividends.

LESSONS LEARNED

I promised to say something of the lessons we have learned and this I will now try to do. I do not deny that the Corporation has had its failures, but we are recovering from them and they have taught many useful lessons both for us and for others. The Corporation was set up with no guiding precedents in a period of acute post-war human and material shortages; it had to create a new machine for a task which, in extent and variety, was entirely new.

There is in the world to-day a widespread urge and a vital need to develop the under-developed areas of the world; energetic action is called for; all kinds of international organizations and local development corporations have been set up, all making demands on available resources of capital and manpower. But one thing is clear, there can be no short cuts to development, particularly in tropical countries. If projects are to be economically sound and worthwhile, there must be a cautious and realistic approach. In this respect the commercial discipline under which the Corporation works is salutary. Proposals for immediate large-scale development must be looked at with much scepticism. There must often be several years of patient experimentation and trial before it can be known that a given crop or a mineral can be produced on a worthwhile scale. All this means delay and is expensive; therefore there must be some certainty that the ultimate return will be such as to justify the cost of experiment and development; there must be a detailed research into markets and the closest possible forecast of prices.

Particularly in tropical agriculture, which is the basis of many colonies' economies, too little is known about the soil, about plant and animal diseases and about the vagaries of climate and rainfall for large schemes to be launched successfully in a hurry. A great deal more has yet to be learned about the economics of mechanized agriculture in the tropics. Land settlement schemes often look attractive socially and politically, but unless there can be introduced an element of non-returnable finance such as C.D. & W. grants, such schemes will generally be outside the Corporation's field.

Another outstanding factor in colonial development that I would emphasize is the vital need for honest and competent management on the spot. There are not enough qualified and competent men of the right calibre for all the jobs that want doing. Wherever appropriate, the Corporation seeks to bring in an established private enterprise which already has a tried organization and an experienced

staff to act as managers, but even this is not universally successful or always necessary. The long-term alternative is for the Corporation to build up a trained staff, but again this cannot be done in a hurry. There are several quite large projects for which C.D.C. has succeeded in obtaining excellent managerial staff who are doing a good job often in difficult circumstances, and with promising results.

There has been some criticism of the Corporation's policy of lending money to other people to carry out development projects instead of doing the development itself. The making of loans has no special priority in Corporation policy but the purposes for which loans have been made, mainly the provision of power, communications, housing, and so on, are all of great value to the colonies concerned, because they provide funds for basic development which will prepare the ground for subsequent much needed secondary development. An assured income from loans which will cover its overhead charges also gives the Corporation greater freedom of manœuvre in taking risks elsewhere; it enables marginal schemes to be given a longer time to prove themselves beyond what would otherwise be justified.

THE FUTURE

Some projects launched three, four or five years ago are now reaching the stage of development at which decisions have to be taken as to the further stages that must follow, so that the early development work can yield fruit. For example, the utilization of the timber from the great afforestation scheme in Swaziland, the processing of bark from the Tanganyika wattle plantations, the further development of the Nyika Forestry Scheme and a number of mineral developments are all being carefully planned, in many cases in co-operation with already arranged commercial associates and with governments, so that they can eventually make their full contribution to increasing colonial primary products. They will, of course, need further outlay of large amounts of capital, not all of which will necessarily be supplied by the Corporation.

The orderly progression of such schemes from stage to stage is just as important a part of the Corporation's duties as the starting of new schemes. Even if no new schemes are started the Corporation has enough development work in prospect to keep it busy for a long time. Nevertheless, many new proposals are continually undergoing careful examination.

Although the Corporation has now been established for eight years, as it looks at the task ahead it feels that it has only just begun. There are some eighty million people in the British colonies, protectorates and dependent territories, all in various stages of political, social and economic development. Speaking as Colonial Secretary in 1951, Lord Chandos said:

First, we all aim at helping the colonial territories to attain self-government within the British Commonwealth. To that end we are seeking as rapidly as possible to build up in each territory the institutions which its circumstances require. Second, we are all determined to pursue the economic and social development of the colonial territories so that it keeps pace with their political development.

This is a great and exciting task; we in the C.D.C. are proud to be taking some part in it.

DISCUSSION

MR. J. P. McDONAGH: If I heard right, of the total capital employed six times as much has been spent on power schemes as on communication schemes. Would I be right in assuming that because of the tendency for the latter to give only long-term returns the policy has been to devote a comparatively small proportion of capital to communication schemes? Coupled with that, now that the Corporation is coming out of the red, can one assume that a higher proportion will be advanced to communication schemes in the future?

THE LECTURER: Your figures are right, power is 26.3 per cent and transport 4.5 per cent, so that the relationship is about six to one, but that is not a reflection of any deliberate policy. It has worked out that way. The Corporation is willing to finance a transportation or communications scheme if it comes within the scope of the Corporation.

One of the obvious questions which can flow from this is, if the C.D.C. has spent £400,000 uncovering coal in Southern Tanganyika why does it not finance the construction of a railway from the coast to that coal. The answer is that unless the construction of such a railway can be made a viable proposition it does not come within the mandate under which we work.

Power schemes, on the other hand, in all ordinary circumstances would be self-supporting and able to raise capital on the market, but the position in Malaya for the last few years has been so disturbed that it was not practical to do so in that case.

MR. K. C. SINCLAIR, O.B.E.: I take it from the figures that Mr. Hume quoted that, from the proportion of capital employed to that available, there is no need of more capital. I wonder though if he would comment on the collaboration between his organization and the World Bank, particularly on the practical level?

THE LECTURER: I do not subscribe to the view that no more capital is needed by the C.D.C. The end of our £100 million is in sight.

Collaboration with the World Bank is quite a feature of our work. There are a number of schemes which are under active discussion with that organization, notably the great Kariba Gorge Scheme in the Central African Federation. We are most willing participants with other organizations which have capital funds at their disposal, but alongside their money we also seek managerial skill in employing it.

MR. PERCY ARNOLD: From what I saw and heard in the West Indies, it would appear that the future of the Corporation is no longer to manage, but to finance. In the light of experience, where the Corporation had fallen down in the past, I was told, was in management. The Corporation could best help by joining with existing firms in the territories, and therefore taking to financing projects jointly with other people rather than managing them themselves. Is this a future trend of the Corporation?

THE LECTURER: You have asked a most important question and I will answer it by quoting a typical case. The Corporation has a large fund of money placed at its disposal by the taxpayers of this country. Somebody comes to it and suggests that it would be a very good thing to grow wattle in Tanganyika and to construct a factory in which the wattle bark is processed and becomes tanning extract. When it is made, it has to be sold, and the whole enterprise conducted efficiently and profitably. It is not practicable for the Corporation to have within itself at any given time a man to whom it can be said 'Mr. Jones, put on your tropical suit and go off to Southern

Tanganyika and grow a wattle forest and make the bark into extract and then sell it'. The C.D.C. must necessarily find some body or bodies capable of doing that. In the period of full employment which we have enjoyed since the war, it is no good putting an advertisement in the press to say 'Wanted: wattle-forest grower'. You will not get one, except perhaps one who is no good. That was one of the ideas which was tried at the start of this Corporation with disastrous results. So you have necessarily to go to some experienced organization and say 'we have the money, you have the managerial experience; now that is a good partnership, let us work together'. The successful managerial structure does not grow over night. It cannot be hired by advertising in the press for it. Somebody must be approached who through years of trial and error has built up a business which works efficiently and profitably. I most sincerely believe that, unless an organization is profitable, it is no good to anybody—financier, employees, government, or local people.

Another example of what I mean is that when Unilever came in with us in Nairobi, the whole project got right because they brought their experience to bear on it. I hope that explains why we are swinging away from trying to run projects ourselves.

SIR EDMUND TEALE: I would like to ask Mr. Hume a question with reference to Tanganyika. He has referred to two schemes which have been investigated, the coal in the south-west and the wattle plantation which is being developed. He indicated that it is outside the scope of the Corporation to consider contributing to the cost of railway construction to develop the coalfields. Some little time ago Sir Edward Twining indicated, with regard to the opening up of the south-western area, that there were three milestones which would eventually determine the building of the railway so vital for the development of that region. The third milestone was the utilization of the Kilombero Valley which offered considerable promise. Has the Kilombero project come within the scope of the Corporation's investigations?

THE LECTURER: We are discussing the scheme which will lead to the building of the railway and hope that something will come of it; but there again we have got the question of arranging for commercial partners. However, when I was in Tanganyika recently the decision to build that railway was fairly well advanced.

MR. ANTHONY HURD, M.P.: Would Mr. Hume tell us when the light dawned to the C.D.C. that they must work closely and intimately with the people on the spot, who would have the know-how which he has just referred to as being essential? I have a first-hand knowledge of the Falkland Islands. That little Colony has bitter disappointment through the hopes that were raised by the development of a freezer works at Ajax Bay, and also a sealing station at Albermarle. The freezer only worked for two years and now it is being written off and abandoned. The same has happened to the sealing enterprise.

It seems to me that both those projects stood a chance of success if the C.D.C. had not been quite so rash, but had begun with a modest pilot scheme and taken the advice of local people—these projects might be working satisfactorily to-day. What is much more important, they might have been earning income which would be very useful to the Colony and to the Empire. I do very much hope that the lecturer will be able to reassure us now that the light has dawned and that we do not ever go into projects of that kind without the fullest consultation at the start to get the co-operation of the local people.

I feel a little bitter about this because the C.D.C. now say that the freezer failed because local interests, notably the Falkland Islands Co., of which I am a director, had not given enough support. I took the trouble to get out the figures whilst I was there and I found that in 1954, which was the last year in which the freezer operated, 16,000 sheep had been sent through the freezer of which the Falkland Islands Co., owning forty per cent of the sheep in the islands, sent 9,000—a very fair forty per

cent! It seems that the blame has been put on local people for the failure of projects when really the C.D.C. were too rash, too impetuous at the start, and did not take the advice about the prospective supplies of sheep and cattle and the scope of the project which would have been freely available to them.

THE LECTURER: I do not want to introduce a controversial note, but there are other people who hold a different opinion. Admittedly that scheme was started in a rather too light-hearted way, but none the less once the freezer was put up it was there and I believe it was reasonably technically efficient. We offered to let it to the local people for a peppercorn and they turned the offer down. I do not know what else we could have done. We might have tried once more advertising in the daily press saying, 'Manager wanted for freezer in the Falkland Islands', but when the local people say 'thanks, we are not having it for nothing', I do not know really where one goes.

SIR ROBERT STANLEY, K.B.E., C.M.G.: The speaker referred, when speaking of the regions, to the possibility of development in the western Pacific. Could he say whether the Corporation contemplate any activity in that direction and whether he feels that in that case it would be possible to give satisfactory supervision from headquarters, say, in Singapore?

THE LECTURER: The C.D.C. itself would be unlikely to initiate a scheme in the western Pacific islands. If, however, the local government or somebody who was interested in that area invited us to participate financially with them, the scheme would be judged on its merits like any other. The question of supervision is one with which I tried to deal in answer to another question. I do not think we could supervise from London a scheme in the western Pacific islands if it had not got the right managerial association in the way I have already tried to describe. This region is not excluded for any geographical reason and, if a scheme comes from those parts of the world, we should in fact be glad to hear about it.

SIR SELWYN SELWYN-CLARKE, K.B.E., C.M.G., M.C. (Chairman, Commonwealth Section Committee): I am sure we are all grateful to Mr. Nutcombe Hume for his very particularly lucid exposition of the work and organization of the C.D.C. It is easy to understand the justifiable pride of those working with the Corporation in the success that has attended their efforts to help the Commonwealth territories in their socio-economic development *pari passu* with the political progress. One sometimes hears criticism of the failure on the part of the Corporation to work in closer partnership with the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. The instance that was mentioned in relation to the coal-field in Tanganyika would seem to me one in point where it would be quite right and proper for the Corporation to develop the area and to do the research work, find the coal, and so forth, and indicate how it could be developed commercially, and perhaps for the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund to construct the railway which would make it possible to exploit this coal. The reorganization of the Corporation on a regional basis in 1951 which Mr. Hume told us resulted in the improvement of local relations, apart from effecting a very considerable reduction in the administrative costs, I think answers another criticism which is sometimes levelled against the Corporation and which has been referred to by one of the previous speakers; that is to say, the insufficient consultation with local interests which took place in former days.

Mr. Hume mentioned racial discrimination and, personally, I should never associate the Corporation with any such idea, but it makes good hearing to know that it is a deliberate policy of the Corporation not to allow any such discrimination.

With so much that is admirable, I trust it will not be taken amiss if I mention just one matter. I hope that the Corporation will exercise its discretion in conforming to

17TH AUGUST 1956

WORK OF COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

local conditions, wages, housing, and so on. I would like to give an instance in point. When I went to Hong Kong in 1938 women were cleaning ginger for ten hours a day at the 'colossal' wage of 1½d. per day. In the last colony in which I served labourers received an equally gargantuan wage when I first set foot in the islands. If they were women they were paid 12s., if men 24s.; not per week, but per month! I should hate to feel the Corporation would be a party to the payment of employees at such rates.

It is very heartening to hear that the Corporation is paying particular attention to the development of medical and welfare services, especially housing.

Does Mr. Hume think that there is a case for better co-ordination, or better integration, between the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and his Corporation?

THE LECTURER: Thank you for what you said. Yes, we are pressing all the time to have a closer working arrangement between the C.D.C. and the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. We hope it will come about. But this Colonial Development and Welfare Fund money is regionalized and the contact might have to be made in the regions. I would hesitate to agree with you that the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds should necessarily be used to finance the construction of a railway. I think that unless a railway holds out the prospect of becoming self-supporting, it would not perhaps be right to use the British taxpayers' money for its construction.

SIR GILBERT RENNIE, G.B.E., K.C.M.G., M.C. (High Commissioner for the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland): May I express appreciation of the good work which the C.D.C. has done in the territory with which I was very closely concerned, Northern Rhodesia, and is still doing in the territories with which I am connected at present, namely, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Corporation has done most valuable work in developing some very important projects in the three territories and I am sure that the Federal Government and the three territorial Governments very much appreciate the co-operation of the Corporation and the very valuable services rendered to the development of their territories by it.

THE CHAIRMAN: It only remains for me to express what I am sure is your feeling—our great gratitude to Mr. Nutcombe Hume for the lucid and extremely able way in which he has explained to us the working of the Corporation and its organization for the work which it has to do, and also for the very convincing way in which he has answered the questions which have been fired at him. He has shown that the Corporation is not free under its Charter to do anything anyway it likes, and there are very severe limitations on its work, and that there will be almost unlimited possibilities for the employment of new capital in the future, after all £100 million is a very small sum when related to the field over which it has to be spread. Last, but not least, I should like to thank you, on behalf of myself and your audience, Mr. Hume, for having shown that the Corporation is under sane management.

A vote of thanks to the Lecturer was carried with acclamation; and, another having been accorded to the Chairman, the meeting then ended.

OBITUARY

MR. ROBERT Y. EATON

We record with regret the death, on 28th July, 1956, of Robert Young Eaton, formerly President of the T. Eaton Co., Ltd., in Toronto.

Robert Y. Eaton was born at County Antrim, Ireland, in 1875, and was educated at the University of London. He joined the T. Eaton Co. as a shipping clerk at the

company's London office in 1897. Later, he moved to the Paris office and, in 1902, went to Canada where he was appointed Secretary of the Company in Toronto.

In 1904, Mr. Eaton was appointed First Vice-President. Eighteen years later, following the death of Sir John Eaton, he was appointed President of the Company, and remained in that capacity until his retirement in 1942.

Widely known as a patron of the arts, he served as President of the Art Gallery of Toronto from 1924 to 1941, following which he was appointed Honorary Vice-President. Mr. Eaton was also a Director of the National Trust Co. and of the Dominion Bank, Honorary Vice-President of the Canadian Red Cross Society, 1941-47, Honorary Director of the Canadian National Exhibition, Governor of the Drama Festival, and a Member of the Board of Governors of the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto.

During World War II, he served the Canadian Government as a Member of the National War Loan Committee, among other projects. He held the rank of Honorary Colonel in the reserve army and was connected with both the Governor-General's Horse Guards and the Third Armoured Regiment as Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel.

Mr. Eaton was elected a Life Fellow of the Society in 1929, and was a sponsor of the Canadian Banquet held in honour of the Society's Bicentenary.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF 1856

VOLUME IV. 29th August, 1856

From a letter by Mr. C. H. Bromby of Cheltenham

EXAMINATION

Sir,—No act of the Society of Arts is more likely to tell upon the education of the artisan than the result which has been so vigorously adopted and carried out during the last few weeks. In the absence of any public system of secondary education, such as the continental governments have instituted, there has been hitherto no encouragement to the boy who has left the elementary school, to carry forward or to preserve the little knowledge that he possesses. I cannot, however, but lament that the advantage to be held out should be restricted to members of Mechanics' Institutes. If the Society would affiliate elementary schools, or, at least, *commercial* and *trade* schools, a great inducement would at once be held out to parents to keep their children longer at school, and a corresponding impulse would be given to *night schools*, in which boys removed to work might still prosecute their studies. Night Schools, as a whole, I take it are a failure. To serve a substantial purpose they should supply the want of *Ecoles de Dessin* and other institutions of secondary education in France and other countries, for want of which our own country will soon be left behind in the markets of the World. The Society of Arts has taken the initiative in supplying that radical defect, but her leverage will be immensely increased if she would extend her patronage to all schools which profess to instruct the pupils in those principles of science that enter into the everyday of our operatives.

I have under my care an elementary school and a higher school. Promising boys may be promoted from the lower to the higher without additional payment. All I want is the opportunity of sending up the best pupils to the examinations of the Society of Arts, and so of rendering them eligible to situations of trust, in order to open out the most encouraging prospect of promotion to a boy of real talent, though he belongs to the lowest condition of life.

By an extension of privilege, such as I have proposed, it appears to me that a great stimulus would be applied to popular education, while the chartered object of the Society of Arts would be directly promoted—the progress of Arts, manufactures and commerce throughout the land.